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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/678,155	10/06/2003	Paul Hayward Kelly	CRAN01-00345	5740
23990	7590	12/28/2011	EXAMINER	
DOCKET CLERK			KUMAR, RAKESH	
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DALLAS, TX 75380			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3651	
			NOTIFICATION DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			12/28/2011	ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

patents@munckcarter.com
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**SUPPLEMENTAL
Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/678,155

Examiner

RAKESH KUMAR

Applicant(s)

KELLY ET AL.

Art Unit

3651

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 08/18/2011.
2. ☒ An election was made by the applicant in response to a restriction requirement set forth during the interview on ____; the restriction requirement and election have been incorporated into this action.
3. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-33.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: ____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).**
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date ____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date ____.
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other ____.

/Gene Crawford/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3651

Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The claim 1 is allowable over the prior art of record because the teachings of the references taken as a whole do not show or render obvious the combination set forth, including:

A vending machine comprising...

said wall surface including a plurality of integrally formed stiffening elements extending between the side edges, and an integrally formed alignment member, wherein the stiffening members minimize bowing of the plurality of column walls under a weight of product containers, the integrally formed alignment member provides for proper positioning of product containers within the product stack areas...

at least one of the plurality of stiffening elements comprises a decoupling member isolating a first area of the column wall from a second area of the column wall to minimize forces in the first area from being transferred to the second area

...in combination with the rest of the claim language is not taught or fairly suggested by the prior art.

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The claim 18 is allowable over the prior art of record because the teachings of the references taken as a whole do not show or render obvious the combination set forth, including:

A vending machine comprising...

a plurality of column walls arranged within the cabinet frame and separating the central cavity into a plurality of product stack areas... define a substantially planar wall surface, said planar surface being defined by a storage region and a dispensing region...

a stiffening element extending fore-to-aft across the planar surface in the dispensing region, said stiffening element comprising a decoupling member separating the bottom edge from the dispensing region such that the dispensing region is only connected to the storage region through web members defined about the decoupling member, wherein a transfer of any bow force from the storage region to the bottom edge is substantially eliminated

...in combination with the rest of the claim language is not taught or fairly suggested by the prior art.

The claim 28 is allowable over the prior art of record because the teachings of the references taken as a whole do not show or render obvious the combination set forth, including:

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A method of forming a column wall...
providing a substantially rectangular metal sheet having top, bottom, and
opposing side edges that define a substantially planar wall surface,
forming a plurality of vertically spaced stiffening elements out of the wall surface,
wherein at least one of the plurality of stiffening elements comprises a decoupling
member isolating a first area of the column wall from a second area of the column wall
to minimize forces in the first area from being transferred to the second area
...in combination with the rest of the claim language is not taught or fairly
suggested by the prior art.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later
than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably
accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on
Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the
examiner should be directed to Rakesh Kumar whose telephone number is (517) 272-
8314. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM - 4:30PM.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gene Crawford can be reached on (571) 272-6911. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/RAKESH KUMAR/

Examiner, Art Unit 3651